

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

~~TOP SECRET~~

January 21, 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: YOUR DISCUSSION BEFORE THE NSC TOMORROW

The following topics are set down in random order and you will surely want to organize them your own way.

1. Cuba

This is surely the biggest event of 1962, and no one has yet heard your personal judgment of its meaning for the Executive Branch. The following are questions that I for one would ask:

A. What do we expect and not expect as a result in our own attitude toward the world -- are we in fact more determined to act on our own best judgment?

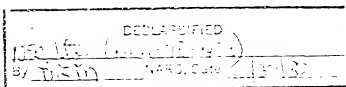
B. What balance do you assess as between restraint in action and determination to act firmly where necessary?

C. How do we estimate the behavior and response of other Governments -- The British, the French, the OAS, the Soviets themselves?

D. Would you be willing to say a word about the way the whole Executive Branch responded to this crisis? It is true that each part responded in its own way -- the JCS with plans for war and the USUN with plans for negotiation -- but in fact they all responded and worked in single-minded support of policies which you set, and this is really more important than any difference of judgment. Even the press behaved in a highly cooperative way until the pressure was off and the post mortems began.

E. We still have Cuba with us, and the fact is that a series of rather low-key recommendations will be coming to the Executive

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Committee from Cottrell's new office. You may want to give some hint of your own judgment of this problem.

F. The post mortem problem is still with us and will have been stirred tomorrow by Stewart Alsop's Post Script. You may want to say a word about your view of such post mortems.

## 2. The National Defense

Since Cuba was in the end a military victory, you may want to move on to the national defense. You are very familiar with the basic posture here -- that over three budgets we have added something like \$10 billion to the Defense budget, with resulting increases in our real strength in every major field. Yet much remains to be done, and the Cuban crisis itself showed how thin our resources are at important points, like supply for reserves. On the other hand, our efforts are not yet matched anywhere in the Alliance, and the next months will bring a sharpening of the issue in Europe: how long should we make efforts others do not match?

You may also want to comment on SKYBOLT, B-70, NIKE-ZEUS and other items we can not afford.

## 3. International Defense

This is the Nassau track -- the one thing I would emphasize, if you are willing, is the absolutely inextricable interlocking of military and political situations here. That was true of SKYBOLT, which we may not have managed as skillfully as we should have (although its politics were mainly a British responsibility); but it is true also of the multilateral force -- and a word from you about the present focal importance of the multilateral force, vis a vis Germany and de Gaulle, would be most helpful.

Still another part of our military effort is symbolized by Viet Nam. Here you may want to indicate merely that we are prepared to stick to it and are not a bit disheartened by incidental differences along the way -- although it would be helpful if our officers on the spot would keep their understandable impatience out of the newspapers.

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4. Aid

What you have already said in the State of the Union message and in conversations with Dave Bell is what this crowd should hear, too, in more pungent language. The one thing Dave Bell would like you to add is the importance of meshing economic and military programs together in countries where they are both important, like Korea, Turkey, Viet Nam, Greece, and India and Pakistan.

5. The Problem of the Alianza

Here again you can say it better than I can -- the main point of course is that we are tied on tight to the Alianza and will go up or down with its fortunes. These fortunes, in turn, require first-class management at our end and serious performance by the Latin Americans.

6. The Neutrals

Here I agree with Bob Komer that we should be strong in our insistence on competing for the neutrals, using both carrot and stick. Komer has prepared a strong memorandum on this topic which I attach. (Tab A)

7. The Test Ban

You will be up to date on this as a result of Bill Foster's meeting with you this afternoon, and there is no point in saying more than that you will obviously wish to refer to it tomorrow. Bill Foster would be glad if you would emphasize to the Administration as a whole what you have emphasized to him -- that you want a test ban treaty for its impact on the arms race and on Communist China, particularly, if a decent agreement can be reached.

8. The Balance of Payments

You have just talked to Doug Dillon on this. I mention it simply so that it won't be omitted -- and take the liberty of saying that I believe our basic international monetary position is much stronger than the immediate gold flow problem suggests.

9. The United Nations

Governor Stevenson has been invited and is presumably coming,

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and Harlan Cleveland will be there. The fact is that our United Nations policy has been unusually successful this year on a number of issues, from Cuba to Red China -- and while the main credit goes to Soviet and Red Chinese misbehavior, the U. S. performance has been a smooth and skillful one at both ends of the line.

10. The Congo

You have just given a private pat on the back to the Department, and it may be useful to say a word or so in the same vein to this group -- but in this company I would mention Spaak, because he and you are the only two men who have had to act against their narrow political advantage on this issue.

11. The Tax Bill

This is an odd one, but I think it may be very helpful for the people who work in the national security field to hear from you at first-hand that progress in this area, with its meaning for the national economy, is in fact the very first priority in national security affairs for 1963. It would not hurt for knowledgeable Washington to learn, in due course, that this was the climax of your NSC briefing.

McG. B.

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